

Page 1, after the title, insert the following new paragraph.

The present application is divisional of application Serial No. 09/831,161, filed June 11, 2001 (allowed), which is a 371 U.S. National Phase of PCT/EP99/08482, filed 8 November 1999, which claims benefit of U.S. Provisional application Serial No. 60/107,646, filed 9 November 1998, the entire contents of each of which is incorporated herein by reference.

Delete the paragraph spanning lines 18-26 of page 2 and insert the following therefor:

In one aspect, the invention comprises a composition for the expansion of chondrocytes, comprising a minimum essential medium, a growth factor, albumin, a steroid, an antioxidant, an iron source, a fatty acid and/or a lipid source, and insulin. In a particularly preferred embodiment, the serum free growth medium for chondrocytes comprises Fibroblast Growth Factor 2 (FGF-2) as a growth factor, linoleic acid as the lipid/fatty acid source, ascorbic acid and β -mercaptoethanol as antioxidants, holo- and apo-transferrin as the iron source, and dexamethasone as a steroid. Optional ingredients can include cholesterol, trace metals such as selenium, and vitamins such as biotin and sodium pantotenate.

Delete the paragraph spanning lines 27 of page 2 to line 6 of page 3 and insert the following therefor:

In another aspect, the invention comprises a composition for the maintenance of mesenchymal stem cells, comprising a growth factor, albumin, a steroid, an antioxidant, an iron source, a fatty acid and/or a lipid source, one or more vitamins, one or more trace metals, and Insulin Growth Factor I (IGF-1), in combination with a minimum essential medium. In a particularly preferred embodiment, the serum free growth medium for mesenchymal stem cells comprises FGF-2, Leukemia Inhibitory Factor (LIF) and Stem Cell Factor(SCF) as growth factors, sodium pantotenate and biotin as vitamins, and selenium as a trace metal.

Delete the paragraph spanning lines 17-19 of page 3 and insert the following therefor:

i) one or more growth factors or proteins which cause resting cells to undergo cell division and/or differentiation, such as insulin, FGF-2, Platelet-Derived Growth Factor bb(PDGFbb), Epiderman Growth Factor(EGF), LIF and SCF and IGF-1;

Insert the attached Abstract after the claims.